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The religious concepts of the Bella Coola are not limited to explanations of strange apparitions, nor to knowledge of a wide range of supernatural beings, anthropomorphic or zoomorphic. Many in whom they believe are invisible and intangible, though none the less potent. Almost every incident of life is attributed to the help or hindrance of a supernatural agency. If a fisherman constructs a salmon-weir, with a considerable amount of work, the Bella Coola ascribe his success to the assistance of some supernatural being or supernormal power; mere labour would never have sufficed. If a man has phenomenal success in hunting, it is because the supernatural has helped him in some way. It is not necessary that an anthropomorphic being should appear; they seldom do, but none deny that in some form or another supernatural ones have aided the enterprise.

This attitude is clearly evident in Bella Coola beliefs concerning the construction of canoes. Many professions depend upon prerogatives without which a person cannot hope to succeed. This is not true of canoe-makers, although it is a great advantage to one of them if *Yulätimut*, the Master Carpenter, appeared to his ancestors in the beginning of time. Even without this in many cases a man can succeed in making a canoe if he is aided by a supernatural teacher, or Model Maker. No one knows much about this being, nor even whether there is more than one of them, but it is through his kindly intervention that a man is able to complete his complicated task. If carpenters who have left a half-finished canoe in the woods, hear adze beats, as they are returning to it, they remain away from the spot, knowing that their work is being done with superhuman efficiency by a supernatural artisan. Under such circumstances even a solitary man can construct one of the large, ocean-going canoes. About 1880 an expert carpenter, named *Yelxhn*, was making

stated definitely that his mother had told him Mackenzie came down the Dean River when her uncle was a young man. As if to confirm this statement he added the inconsequential detail that Mackenzie, in dire straits for food, killed and ate a dog, and that he was given a marmot-skin blanket.

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human wearer belongs to a sphere differing from that of supernatural animals and is dangerous to them. Consequently, if worn clothing be thrown on a fire it repels unpleasant visitors. Other powerful protections are false hellebore, and smoked salmon roe. A wise hunter always carries these and if he sees a dangerous creature such as a *snuniq*, he chews the two together and spits them towards the peril. Needless to say, if a kindly animal is seen, the hunter does not drive it away by these methods. Why false hellebore should be so effective is a matter of wonder to the Bella Coola themselves, for as a rule it is the human essence attached to objects which gives them their strength over the supernatural. Thus the most powerful of all charms are pads that have been used by women during their menses. If a woman travels on the ocean she is careful to carry some of them with her ready to repel any danger from the supernatural water beings."[77]

The manner in which the Bella Coola regard mythical animals and other evidences of the supernatural is illustrated by the following practice. Hunters always want to know the direction of the wind, and when the breeze is too slight to be discernible they blow upwards a small amount of eagle down, which is so light that the faintest breath of air will bear it down wind. What the logical white man considers a natural phenomenon, appears to the Bella Coola as miraculous; eagle down, stripped from the dead bird by human hands and stored for some time within a house, has become so humanized that it can conquer supernatural powers to indicate the direction of the wind.

The mythical monsters already described are not the only animals regarded as supernatural by the Bella Coola. They believe that in the beginning *Älquntäm* created men and beasts at the same time and in the same place, giving the former the greater share of power, but not exiling the latter to a different plane of existence. In those early days, the semi-supernatural

[77] This matter will be described more fully in connection with Magic; see vol. I, chap. xi.

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men to see these transformed beings habitually, but even now, or at any rate until a few years ago, shamans were able to lift the intervening veil. From accounts given by those who have had such experience, the Bella Coola believe that *Alquntăm* gave to birds and animals, as well as to humans, the boon of fire, and it is only the unworthiness of men that makes them unable to see the smoke rising from the houses of different creatures. In former times, fortunate hunters were able to do so, and consequently had phenomenal success. The smoke that ascends from the fires of different animals corresponds in colour to that of its owner; a mountain goat's is white, a beaver's, black, a squirrel's, red, a wolf's, gray, and so on. When a goat stamps the earth on a mountain, it rings hollow, as indeed it is to those animals, for their home is within; and when a hunter loses his quarry entirely, it is because the latter has entered its house. Shamans are sometimes able to hear the gatherings of animals under the peaks. Like human beings, they dance to the accompaniment of music, and in all respects behave like them. They have their times of joy and sorrow, of success and failure. When ill they are cured by their own shamans, grizzly bear, *sminq*, and wolverine; these three also dance to welcome the dead. All animals and birds are like brothers, able to converse with each other and living harmoniously together in that other part of their life which only shamans have seen. Porcupine is the oldest, and a hunter always tries to kill one before passing to more important prey. The animals know about the actions of human beings and show their aversion to certain habits by refusing to allow themselves to be seen by anyone practising them. For example, they do not like people to drink water in which dog salmon have been soaked, and no hunter would dream of partaking of that food. Bella Coola mythology is full of accounts of human beings who, with supernatural aid, were able to penetrate to the homes of animals. Tales of this type would be unintelligible without understanding the attitude of the people to the animal and bird kingdoms.

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and leapt away apparently uninjured. The Bella Coola say that yearling goats have very strong spirits (I, p. 94) which make possible such actions.

Though generally callous with regard to the sufferings of animals, the Bella Coola are usually careful not to kill more than they need; and knowledge of the supernatural power possessed by animals sometimes leads men to treat them with great consideration. For example, if a bull-head is caught in an olachen net in the river, the fisherman throws it back into the water, saying:

"I have saved you; please do the same for me."

The following incident, believed without question by the Bella Coola, shows the manner in which bull-heads help those who have often befriended them. About 1880 a Kimsquit fisherman, *Ălłakān·i*, fell into a rapids where he was in great danger of drowning. A bull-head, seeing his plight and mindful of former help, increased his size and shoved *Ălłakān·i* ashore with its nose.

"I have saved you, mortal," said the bull-head, as he did so.

The ability to increase in size is not restricted to fish, but is shared by small mammals and reptiles. Lizards, for instance, four feet in length, are said to live permanently in a pond about seven miles below Kimsquit; they are termed *ɣualās*.

Toads, too, can aid mortals. If a man see a snake devouring one of them he will, if he is wise, kill the snake and say to the toad:

"Please help me when I am in difficulties."

A toad never forgets its obligations and if that man should fall into a river when the toad is near, the latter will grow large enough to drag him forth.

Snakes are regarded with aversion and disgust. This may be in part due to the belief that they cook for *Ălłāt·ĭaistl* (I, p. 49), but more because these reptiles enter the stomachs of human beings. The Bella Coola believe that snakes are the offspring of a supernatural Mother of Snakes, a mythical being of dread powers. The following story illustrates their beliefs

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concerning the danger of near approach to this creature:

Ḵwilais was a man of mixed lineage, Kimsquit and *Pes*, near Newitte. With several companions he was gathering berries when he stepped into a hole and felt numerous tiny creatures crawling over his legs. Looking down, he saw that they were small snakes, that had just been hatched from a Mother of Snakes. He fled, terrified, pursued by the reptiles, which he managed to keep off to some extent by brushing behind him a branch of spiny swamp gooseberry, a known deterrent. When he had out-distanced the snakes he called his companions, told them of his adventure, and returned home. There he repeated the tale. Though *Ḵwilais* did not know it, many of the snakes had succeeded in entering his stomach. Presently he began to swell; his body became larger and larger until he was in danger of bursting. The reptiles within were breeding rapidly. Luckily, one of his fellow villagers knew the proper remedy. A raised bed was made for the sufferer about five feet from the ground where *Ḵwilais* stretched himself on a number of thorny branches, while his friends built a fire of devil's club and swamp goose-berry twigs so that he was fumigated in the [illegible] greater potency, they cast on the flames soiled clothing and pounded cedar-bark pads stained with menstrual blood; even this was of no avail, so finally a woman squeezed out into a vessel some of her menstrual blood which *Ḵwilais* drank. This killed the snakes. The patient began to vomit, emitting a mass of wriggling serpents, and at once began to grow thinner, soon regaining his normal condition. Had he not been able to eject the reptiles, he would have died.

Ḵwilais was not the only one to have this unpleasant experience. Many others have suffered in the same way, but in no case has anyone been able to feel the snakes at the actual place or time of entry.

The beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the power possessed by animals are clearly shown by their attitude with regard to killing them. Man is immortal, so are animals. *Alquntăm* decreed that beasts and birds should serve as food for mankind, but it is only their clothing, their worthless "blanket of flesh," as the Bella Coola express it, which they give to hunters. In the autumn leaves appear to die, but every spring they are reborn. Similarly, when an animal is slain, it merely discards its visible self while its spirit[a] ascends

[a] *Ts'emtsaic*, see vol. I, p. 94.

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to the land above whence, in course of time, it comes down to earth again to reanimate a new body.* Consequently, the success of a hunter does not indicate his mastery over an animal so much as the latter's good-will in allowing itself to be slain by one who has pleased him by ceremonial chastity (I, p. 110), or by one who has been endowed with skill by some other supernatural being. Men are accordingly careful to obey the wishes of their quarry. Long ago, a mountain goat told a shaman that he and his friends liked coat, so a hunter who has killed one always smears two bands of ashes across its face from the right eye to the left side of the mouth. Another shaman was told by a bear never to use owl-feathered arrows since none of his fellows killed with such would return. Plumes of other birds have since been used, preferably those of mallard ducks. Sometimes the wishes of an animal require considerable ritual. For example, when a bear is killed, the carcass is stretched upon neatly arranged evergreen boughs and skinned. The hunter reverses the pelt so that the tail lies near the neck, with the whole hanging loosely over the body. He puts it four times, as if pressing the skin back into place, and says:

"Please don't linger. Go home and return," or,

"Please come to me tomorrow. Tell your brothers, your sisters, your uncles, your aunts and your other relations to come to me."

Should this be omitted, the animal is likely to stand up, skinless, shake itself, causing the pelt to return to its place, and run away. Yearling mountain goats are especially prone to do this, as already mentioned. Even if an animal does not show its resentment by escaping in this way, it often refuses to return to earth unless the proper rites have been performed over its carcass.

Bears have another aversion: they do not like to be eaten by men. So the hunter leaves the skinned body for wolves

*There are doubters in Bella Coola as in every other community, and several of the older men express disbelief in the immortality of animals.

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and eagles whom he invites to devour it. In so doing, he does not address them by their usual names, but calls *Wolf, Mhas i-garum*, "The Devourer of Meat Which He Does Not Kill," that is, "The Biting Scavenger"; and Eagle, *Asatkatyan-marum*, "The Constant Eater," that is, "The One Who Eats before He Is Hungry." Next morning the fish has been devoured and the hunter believes his guests have come in. Animals and birds, being supernatural, can hear the words of mortals and read their thoughts. The significance of these actions is that animals have the power to conceal themselves, so a hunter must gain their favour before he can hope to succeed. Belief in the efficacy of such customs as these is rapidly falling into decay and bear meat is now often eaten, but the skull is carefully placed in an evergreen tree near where the animal is slain, so that it may come back to life.

Fish, likewise, are immortal. In autumn the streams are choked with dead and dying salmon, but the Bella Coola know that they are not really dead, they have merely shed their worthless blankets in accordance with *Alquntin*'s decrees. At that season of the year he causes the rivers to rise so that they will creep away these useless and outworn cloaks.

Although the salmon, from the kindness of their hearts, allow human beings to feast on their blankets, yet they have certain likes and dislikes which are carefully observed. From the time the first spring salmon appear (I, pp. 759-760) until the rising of the *July* moon, women are not allowed to eat them or to go near the river. Men may eat the fish, but instead of throwing the bones to dogs, they carefully return them to the river saying:

"Please come back tomorrow."

If this is inconvenient, bones can be thrown into the woods with impunity.

Salmon, like men and animals, live a human-like existence in their homes far beneath the surface of the ocean. They lack and desire earthly objects, especially pounded cedar-bark (see Appendix A) to use as sponges for their children, so the Bella Coola thread pieces of it and eagle down on the water.

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place where he is not likely to be disturbed, and addresses the supreme god in a loud tone of voice, requesting his assistance. 782

Although prayers can be said at any time of the day, or at any season of the year, there are occasions when they are more potent than at other times. At dawn, for example, a wise young man is accustomed to go alone to the river to wash and pray. He enters the icy water, blows mucus over his hands, [783] and rubs his body vigorously* either with a smooth pebble, or, if it can be obtained, with a stone taken from the stomach of a sea-lion.* As he scours himself, he asks *Mouketc* to grant him long life, power, success, and strength. On coming from the water, he repeats his request, and then washes himself again. This process is repeated four times, making eight prayers in all. A young man who does this habitually, and in other ways placates the supreme deity, is likely to have success, and may even be given supernatural assistance by one of the many anthropomorphic or zoomorphic creatures. The underlying belief is that *Hyonitee* actually hears the words spoken and, pleased thereby, aids the petitioner either directly, or by strengthening the supernatural elements in his body.

Mouketc has power over both rain and dry weather, and [821] is petitioned for whichever is desired. When the sun is obscured by rain clouds, the Bella Coola pray:

"Please close your face, *Mouketc*," or,

"Please show us your face, we need you."

Before a man starts on a journey, either by canoe or on [484] foot, he always asks help for his undertaking.

"*Mouketc*," he prays, "Be with me," or "Go before me," or, "Give me what I want."

Corresponding to the importance of the occasion, prayers [824] are always made before the departure of a hunting or war [825] [826] [827] [828] [829] [830] [831]

*Water was formerly used for washing both the body and clothing. It was followed by the application of clean water, and undoubtedly had a religious significance. Indeed, washing purely for cleanliness was not habitual until recently.

**The Bella Coola stone that stones are often found in the stomachs of sea-lions. One specimen, considered of great value, was seen. It was indistinguishable from a water-smoothed river pebble.

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party. Canoes always start soon after dawn, and each member of the expedition is careful to pray before leaving, and also to avoid eating in case food should in any way interfere with the success of the venture. Before reaching their destination, a chief in each canoe draws from a pouch some eagle down brought for the purpose, holds it before his mouth, and blows a little towards each of the four cardinal points, at the same time asking *Mouakaic* to smile on the enterprise and grant a safe return. This does not guarantee success, but it is felt that any disaster which may occur would have been more serious if assistance had not been thus requested.

Although *Alquntăm*, under the name of *Mouakaic*, is the one to whom prayers are most often addressed, petitions are sometimes made to other beings. In the beginning of time, when Raven had superabundant power, mortals frequently sought his assistance. At the present time, he is sometimes asked for aid, in the belief that he may still have some shreds of his former power, or be in a better position than men to intercede with *Mouakaic*. If ravens croak when it is raining, people may ask them to request the supreme being to stop the rain; in such cases, a petitioner is careful to address a raven as *Nemaklis*, his title as chief, rather than as *Qoaot*. In cold winter weather, a raven is sometimes caught alive, its head smeared with grease, and as it is released, the captor says:

"Please cool the cold wind, *Nemaklis*."

Prayers are also said half humorously, half seriously, on many occasions. When, for example, clothing has become too ragged for further use, it is thrown on a fire with the remark:

"Please come to me again, new."

The thrower does not actually believe that in so doing he is asking help from his clothing, but it gives him a certain sense of satisfaction thus to have expressed his desires.

The prayers above described can be said by anyone, at any time; they are means of propitiation known to the whole community. In addition, information was obtained about two prayers, each of which is the jealously guarded prerogative

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the point between Labouchere Channel and Bentinck Arm, there is danger from treacherous currents, so, when a shaman passes either of these places, he lays some food on the water and puffs eagle down into the air as he asks for help. If no shaman is in the canoe, this is done by the captain.

The being to whom offerings are most commonly made is *Thixtpililo·a*, the supernatural woman who cures the sick and gives power to shamans. Whenever a hunter kills an edible animal in the forest, he cuts off four pieces of flesh and throws them into his fire to gain her goodwill. Long, long ago, *Thixtpililo·a* appeared to a hunter, seized some of his quarry, and told him of her wishes with regard to presents; these have since been obeyed by wise people. Similarly, the relatives of a man absent in the mountains or at sea throw scraps of food on the fire and ask the protection of *Thixtpililo·a* for the one in danger. In this case, it is clear that objects thrown into flames are received and appreciated by *Thixtpililo·a*.

Mouskuic, although usually propitiated by prayer, is also given presents. Frequently, when a man is praying, he accompanies his words by blowing up into the air small particles of eagle down. Prayers in connection with the departure of war or hunting expeditions have already been mentioned, but before starting on any journey by canoe, the captain is careful to pray and to throw upon the water four pieces of red, and four of yellow cedar-bark. The blowing upwards of eagle down is a common accompaniment to all kinds of prayers, but, if none is available, cedar-bark can be used equally satisfactorily. If possible, this is cast on the surface of water, otherwise into a fire, as a request is being made. The Bella Coola do not believe that such presents are actually used and considered valuable by *Mouskuic*, but they emphasize and accompany the vocal prayer, and demonstrate the petitioner's sincerity.

Ghosts, on the other hand, depend almost entirely on presents given them by mortals, since food is not abundant in the land below. The relatives of a dead person always throw

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who, in turn, would pass on the request so that it might reach each member of the party. Not only is it contrary to custom for a commoner to hold intercourse with a chief's wife, but it is unknown for a man to ask another to sleep with his wife, so the youth was surprised and rather frightened. However, he acceded to the request, passed on the instructions, and washed. As he was bathing, a seal appeared in the surf beside him, and he was able to kill it easily. Each in turn behaved in the same manner, washed, and then killed a seal. Next morning, when the chief returned he was delighted that all had turned out in accordance with his hopes. At the same time the wind dropped so that the party was able to return home.

The power which had brought the seals within reach of the men had been engendered in their own bodies by these ritual acts after a rather lengthy period of continence. The Bella Coola believe that such a procedure always increases their strength and ability, therefore giving them a better chance to gain favour from supernatural beings, and to take advantage of opportunities offered. Hunters in particular are careful with regard to their marital life since animals know their acts and thoughts, and hide from one who has not made himself "clean" by continence, its termination, and bathing. *Sxetsta* consists of these three elements, but since continence is the most prominent feature, the term may be translated as "ceremonial chastity."

In its simplest form this comprises merely the three elements already mentioned. The longer the continence, the greater the power engendered by its termination. A man who has practised abstinence for a year has such strength within himself that almost any good fortune may occur, and cases are known in which it has been carried out for even longer periods. More often, an individual practises ceremonial chastity in accordance with a family tradition. One old man gave the following recipe and was most emphatic that it always brought success in hunting and fishing; he added that on the two occasions he had tried it, he had brought back a phenomenal number of skins.

A person planning to set out on an expedition for any pur-

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pose should remain continent for several nights to increase his generative powers. He then selects a time for beginning the rite and on the second and fourth nights from that date sleeps with his wife, holding intercourse repeatedly and vigorously until he is utterly exhausted. Before dawn on the third and fifth days he must wash in the river or in some quiet stream. Then follow four nights of restraint, a further intercourse, and washing before dawn. The period is next increased to eight nights, then twelve, and finally sixteen, each with a similar contact and bathing. The nights of abstinence are thus forty in all, a lucky number. An unmarried man can obtain power in the same manner with the assistance of a female friend; it is the act itself that is vital, not the union of husband and wife.

At the present time, only two Bella Coola are said to know this particular type of ceremonial chastity, which they conceal carefully, even refusing offers to buy their knowledge. It is potent at any time, but especially if the periods of continence have been so arranged that they terminate at one of the solstices. Then, indeed, can a hunter set off with every prospect of success, knowing that the human taint disliked by animals has been removed, and been replaced by a ceremonial cleanliness pleasing to them. If the time terminates at the winter solstice, the hunter should set out immediately; if it ends in June, he must remain away from women after his final intercourse. In September or October, when ready to leave for the hunt, he must sleep beside his wife for the last four nights; each night he must place his leg between hers, and each morning the two must wash together. The best fortune of all is obtained by a man who observes this forty-night period for four successive years.

Another, and more common, count[24] is to observe continence for four nights, followed by intercourse. Immediately afterwards, the man should eat as much devil's club[25] as pos-

[24]The record of nights is kept by notches cut in a stick or by knots on a cord.

[25]Or false hellebore. This latter plant is thought to be so poisonous that the eating of even a twig an inch in length is fatal; a very small amount, however, all that is ever taken, acts as a powerful emetic.

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224 785 [824] [278] [783] sible, selecting small twigs from which the bark and spines have been rubbed off. This acts as an emetic, so that before washing in the morning he has vomited from his stomach all polluting matter, especially any human hair which animals consider particularly unclean. Before dawn he goes to the river and remains beneath the surface as long as possible, irrespective of the coldness of the water. Then he returns slowly to his house. Four nights later the same acts are repeated. These eight nights of continence are followed by two further periods, each of four nights, making a total of sixteen. Thus fortified, a hunter anticipates great success.

785 A person practising ceremonial chastity is in a condition peculiarly susceptible to disaster, and must observe certain restrictions. If, for example, anyone sees him as he returns from washing in the morning, the power which he has been accumulating so laboriously is lost. Owing to this belief, it is customary for a man to wash long before dawn and to come creeping into his house through a hole in the floor. He must always be the last to retire at night, the first to rise in the morning; and he must say nothing about what he is doing. Intercourse is, of course, absolutely forbidden except on the proper nights, and at other times he must not even put his arm around his wife. [837] Failure to obey these restrictions destroys any advantage from ceremonial chastity, while actual disaster follows should a man's wife misconduct herself with anyone else when he is using her for this purpose. If she is unfaithful, her husband is certain to be slain by an animal when hunting, or to slip and be killed on a mountain trail. Animals know all that human beings do [825] or think, and they punish anyone who is unable to perform ceremonial chastity fittingly. Behind these restrictions there 831 is undoubtedly the sentiment that intercourse, held duly and 785 properly at the right time, is not a mere desire of the flesh, but a ceremonial act. Indeed, when the Bella Coola speak of it in [833] connection with ceremonial chastity, they do not use the [195] common term, *e-m*, which has a coarse implication, but *xoldjat* which has a polite and almost sacred implication.

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Ceremonial chastity is considered almost a necessity to hunters, and in former years a man would rarely, if ever, set out to seek game without fortifying himself by at least several days of continence followed by washing. In the few cases known of a female assuming the clothing and activities of a male, she has been forced to hire a man to sleep with her on the proper nights before starting to hunt. But hunters are by no means the only ones to observe ceremonial chastity. If a man wants to build a salmon-weir, it is by this means that he makes himself strong enough to succeed; if he plays cards, good fortune is sought in the same fashion. The guests at a potlatch observe ceremonial chastity so that their host may not forget them in his distribution of presents, the host, that his guests may arrive on time. The *kusiut* dancer thus fortifies himself for the performance of a dangerous ritual. In this way a man experiences dreams foretelling the future. In every desire or activity of life, ceremonial chastity is a potent means of success, not infallible, usually combined with prayer and in many cases with sacrifice, but a background and accompaniment to every means of propitiation. If a man has conspicuous ill-luck, it is because he has failed to observe ceremonial chastity; if he succeeds, it is because he has done so. At the present time there is living in the Bella Coola valley an old white man who for years has ranged the mountains in search of gold; he has been unsuccessful, and the Bella Coola believe that he will never succeed until he observes ceremonial chastity.

The strength which a man may acquire through the practice of this rite is almost limitless. A man may be ailing on account of the leaning of his tally post, but, if he energetically and faithfully observes chastity, it will become straightened, whether automatically or through the agency of *Alqunâ'x* is uncertain. After the termination of a long period of continence, a man's spirit is so strong that his friends place their hands on the back of his neck in order to absorb some of the power radiating from his spirit. Ancient myths record how the mere force engendered in a man's body by lengthy abstin-

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tions on this subject always excited them, but every effort was made to verify the following statements.

As with names, the easiest way to understand the rights of the ancestral family in land is by first considering the mythological explanation, which mirrors conditions as they existed at the coming of white men. On reaching this earth the first people are believed to have prospected for suitable settlement sites, places where salmon and olachen could be caught, and if possible, near side valleys where berries were abundant. Here they released the animals and plants which they had brought with them, on which they thenceforth subsisted, in accordance with the supreme deity's instructions. The members of the group pre-empted these areas for themselves. Waste land, far from any village was, and still is, free to anyone. A few years after the first settlements had been made, according to the myths, the supreme god sent down to Kimsquit a certain *Alquntâm* who allotted and marked the territory which was the property of each community; at that time a village consisted merely of a group of the first settlers. No similar myth was recounted for either Bella Coola or *Tâl'io*, although their concepts with regard to land are identical with those of the Kimsquit. This really gave a sacred sanction to the possession of land, an important matter to a people so religiously inclined as the Bella Coola.

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The system of land tenure follows the same somewhat abstruse principles that govern the possession of names in an ancestral family. Hunting and collecting grounds appropriated by the first people, or by their immediate descendants, are the property of their offspring, the ancestral family. The Bella Coola term for such an area is *sal'loam*, also called, *nxnumuta*, which means "Food Supply."

It will thus be seen that a hunting-area is not the property of any single individual, but belongs to a group of persons, most of whom live in a single town. The relatives of a man who intends to give a potlatch usually give him, temporarily, exclusive rights to the hunting-ground. As with names, there [224] [431]

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He is especially rich in caribou-skins, used for foot covering, and goat-skins, so treasured for their wool.[1] He and his wife have laid up abundant food, and, most important of all, his wife's family is wealthy. Rumours have spread that X will soon give a potlatch and perhaps one or more foreign chiefs has given him a large cone-shaped whistle, such as is used in *nusaik* ritual (see Plate 12). These whistles, called *qomo·ts*, are often referred to as the "breath" or "voice" of a chief; they are also called *slopsta*, the "heart" or "wind" of a chief; a third designation is *nalwinuts*. X carefully conceals a whistle in one of his boxes. Such a present expresses the kindly feeling existing between those akin to one another in that they have risen to a position of eminence above the common crowd. Its receipt spurs a man to greater efforts to amass the wealth necessary for giving a potlatch by keeping before his eyes the realization of what another has done. A rival chief never gives such a present. X returns each whistle secretly at the time of his potlatch.

Early in the autumn X decides that he has almost enough wealth. To complete the essential amount he will not hesitate to borrow from his friends. It is most unusual to be refused, for it is incumbent on X, unless he wishes to lose the esteem of the community, to repay his borrowings with heavy interest, and when X distributes his goods at his potlatch it will be announced how he has obtained them, and the lender is proclaimed as a person of sufficient wealth to be able to spare some of it. Goods so loaned are termed "belt goods," a reference to the manner in which a man fastens up his cape with a belt before setting to work. The assumption is that X will have to labour to repay his indebtedness. Failure to repay is a serious matter, and the lender would be justified in seizing a canoe or other valuable article as surety for his debt; in fact, feuds are commonly caused by unpaid debts. Men of business

[1] Formerly, when goat-skin blankets were highly valued, goats were never shot for fear of the blood staining the wool. Instead, they were cornered by dogs, and choked to death in nooses. For presentation, each skin was laid out on the floor and then cut into longitudinal strips, two, three, or four fingers wide.

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sion by repeating loudly a few words, or even phrases, from the speeches being delivered, or calling on the audience to notice what has just been said and to listen attentively. A white man would be annoyed at such interruptions, but the Bella Coola consider them evidences of attentiveness. 203 556*

The making of comments is a duty performed at every type of ceremony, but it is indispensable at potlatches; since a chief depends on the heralds to emphasize and explain the points of his family history which are being displayed. One intelligent man likened their functions to a compass, constantly guiding the course of ceremonial life. Without a herald a chief would be as useless as a ship tossed on the ocean with no hand to steer. Although the principal duty of heralds is to extol the actions of a chief, they can, and are expected to, deride one who fails to carry out the customary requirements. Cases have occurred in which influential men have so far forgotten their function of generosity as to fail to invite their fellows after killing a deer or other large animal; or women have declined to share their abundant berries. Nothing is said at the time, but when next the people have come together for some ceremony, a herald refers to the omission under so slim a disguise that everyone is aware of his meaning. This public ridicule lowers the prestige of a chief to such an extent that he is careful not to offend again. Not many years ago, a certain Kimsquit chief failed to ask others to share some mountain goats which he had killed; at the first opportunity a herald referred to himself as *Yaki*, Mountain Goat, and all present realized that he was really alluding to the one who had been remiss. 203 556* 558 626 [224] [222]

Heralds must exercise care in their witticisms at the expense of chiefs because, unless public opinion is with them, the point of the remark is lost, and they expose themselves to the wrath of the person offended. Nevertheless, heralds always strive to cause merriment, and often take risks with this aim in view. They try to make humorous remarks, and also to cause amusement by their antics. As already described, the donor of a potlatch may throw to one of them a dish containing liquid food 203 522 556*

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224 424 [463] [551] [555] [556] 224 424 184 [177] 223 424

THE PROFESSION OF HUNTER

Another profession which is entered by means of an ancestral prerogative is that of hunting. Many Bella Coola have validated their right to this vocation, some by confirming names created by their early ancestors, others by legalizing those brought down from above in the beginning of time. One of the latter is *Lelaimkila*, "The Brusher Off," so-called because the owner is such a successful hunter that he can sweep mountain goats from the mountains as easily as an ordinary person can brush insects from a wall. Unlike the professions of carpenter and singer, it is believed that legalization of a hunter's name always brings success to the holder; perhaps because everyone is more or less successful, it follows that whatever good fortune is achieved by a professional hunter can be attributed to the validation of his prerogative. Others, lacking this assistance, may be proficient, but their success never carries with it the social prestige gained by a man who has distributed goods to substantiate the prerogative.

There is a difference of opinion among the Bella Coola as to whether or not certain hunting methods are inheritable prerogatives. With the introduction of rifles, these have long been discontinued, and no definite information was obtained regarding the social position of their users. Several of the older men believed that the contrivances depended upon ancestral prerogatives, whereas others stated that they were merely individual discoveries which could have been, and in many cases were, imitated by anyone. It seems probable that most of the following practices are prerogatives, although it may be that they are no more than special hunting devices suitable only in certain areas and, therefore, limited to the members of the ancestral family owning that particular locality.

The method about which the most definite information was obtained, was one formerly employed by a certain *Nuxalqiq* to catch geese at *Tâl-ic*. According to one elderly Bella Coola,

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225 small ocean-going canoe, with an assistant who passed his paddle through the water in such a way that a slight phosphorescent streak resulted. This resembled the course of a salmon. In a short time a seal would rise in pursuit of the "fish," and the watchful hunter would harpoon it. The seal would rush off with the head of the weapon, which was attached by a long line to the shaft remaining in the hunter's hand He would play it like a huge fish, until the exhausted animal was drawn to the side of the canoe and clubbed. Several seals were often obtained by this means in the course of a single night.

224 424 The two usual methods of killing mountain goats are by cornering them with dogs and then choking them to death, or by shooting with rifle or bow. There was formerly a special method of snaring which had been handed down as a prerogative from the time of the first people. The hunter used to set his snares on a precipitous path commonly used by goats and had remarkable success. Others might know how to make snares and where the hunter set them, but no one would ever attempt this method of hunting without the proper prerogative. Another right, enjoyed by another hunter, was the catching of bears in a similar way in nooses.

424 556 182 Little need be said in conclusion about these particular privileges, except to emphasize that they are merely an aspect of the principle of validated prerogatives which permeates every phase of Bella Coola life. It is as natural for a man to be made a singer or a hunter by the distribution of presents as it is for him to acquire a dance by the same means. Each is contained in an ancestral myth, and the validation of the prerogative enables the incumbent either to function actively, or at least to enjoy the social prestige attached to the craftsman who has been duly confirmed in his vocation. The necessity of bestowing gifts to validate a prerogative introduces an economic element to the concept, but this is lessened by the fact that a poor man can acquire a name by a relatively small

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performance of rites of this kind. But sociological and ethical concepts, shown at their highest development in the potlatch, are not limited to a few weeks of the year, or to any class of the community. Generosity on a large scale can be publicly displayed by chiefs alone, but to a lesser degree this virtue must be practised by everyone, since avarice is considered a major sin. Anyone who happens to pass a house in which a meal is taking place must be invited to share it; to do otherwise would be considered rude. The person summoned must take at least a trifle to show that he is not churlish and too proud to eat with his host, while if he is hungry, he shares whatever is being served as a matter of course. The head of the family should be the first to taste any wine[a] as proof that it is not poisoned, but otherwise he fares little, if any, better than his guests. This custom is now rapidly falling into disuse through the construction of individual family houses with doors and locks. The fisherman who has exclusive rights to a suitable place for netting olachen or salmon must give some of his catch to anyone who asks him. If he has landed four salmon, the first solicitor is given one, later comers, none at all. When a net is set in the river, anyone passing is allowed to raise it and take some of the contents; if there are two fish, he may remove one, if many, three or four. To take all would be a despicable theft, sufficient to brand the transgressor as greedy; hence public opinion prevents the system from being carried to excess. A hunter who brings back several mountain goats or other large game is expected to invite his neighbours to a feast, which virtually means that he must share his takings.

Presents of this kind increase the prestige of the donor who has thus acted in accordance with Bella Coola ethics, and are advantageous investments since others must reciprocate. The system is carried to such lengths that, until recent years, it was more profitable to give away goods than to sell them. In the case of a sale, the purchaser endeavours to give as little as possible, whereas the recipient of a gift returns as much as

[a] This is a modern practice, dating from the introduction of house-keys.

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though they may be to the white man. It is hoped that the preceding illustrations, drawn from recent times, will explain the mental attitude of the Bella Coola better than incidents from folk-lore of the distant past.

Disregarding thoughts which, since they are caused by the spiritual elements of the human body, are ever present, reactions with the supernatural may be divided into the following categories:

(1) Appearance of supernatural beings from which neither good nor bad results follow. Strictly speaking, every fleeting sight of a supernatural being belongs to this category, but it will be convenient to describe only experiences of a peculiar kind, such as the Bella Coola call *qun ăkălawadjutsĕis*. Usually manifestations of the supernatural have certain effects; consequently, there are relatively few incidents of this kind recorded.

(2) Supernatural aid vouchsafed to a man or a woman in distress. There are many tales illustrating this, which are told and retold to the children. In most cases the assistance is given to one who has undeservedly, according to Bella Coola concepts, fallen into misfortune.

(3) Supernatural good luck. This may be obtained by anyone, and consists of the acquisition of a supernatural object to attract, not only fish and animals, as if it were a potent bait, but money and goods as well.

(4) Acquisition of shamanistic power, with or without the ability to cure the sick. This may be received from one of two sources:

(*a*) *Thĕxĕpălĕx-a* or some other supernatural being.

(*b*) Ghosts, which are likewise supernatural.

(5) Obtaining prophetic powers direct from the supreme god. There are few instances of this, and none that is ascribed to a remote period. It is possible that all examples of this kind can be attributed to indirect Christian influence.

(6) Obtaining power from a supernatural being localized in a particular spot. This usually takes the form of succour when

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539 * 787 She assumed it to be a forest fire, but, when she idly went near to investigate, her amazement was past all bounds at seeing a fine house filled with valuables. Nor was her surprise lessened when she discovered that *'Yeäxdji* was lord of it all. He welcomed her gladly, gave her a hearty meal, and sent back with her some seal meat for her child, only adding that it was to be eaten secretly as he did not wish his father to know of his good fortune.

"But," he added, "I don't mind if you send me any of the people except my father, especially any who were good to me long ago."

The slave woman thankfully carried the meat home to her child. But he, long deprived of proper food, ate so ravenously that night that a lump stuck in his throat and his coughing awoke *Qomo'sala*. The chief pounded the youngster's back until he vomited what was obviously a piece of seal. The slave woman, remembering *'Yeäxdji*'s order, tried to evade her master's questions as to where her son had obtained it, but at last she blurted out the truth, how the abandoned youth had become prosperous.

The slave woman and her friends moved to *Qwiyai*, where *'Yeäxdji* used his power of thought to obtain for them houses filled with everything they could desire. But *Qomo'sala* and those left with him were starving, so that they too were driven to seek his aid, gladly marrying their daughters to him in return for his protection. He rapidly rose to a position of importance, being the husband of both real and fictitious wives, and was even able to provide his elder brothers with mates. Some of the women married to him became almost his slaves, as their families were unable to rebuy them.

Supernatural Good Luck

777 * 787 A third manner in which the Bella Coola can come into contact with powers of another plane is through supernatural good luck. This consists in obtaining something from a supernatural being, usually a portion of its slain body, which acts as a bait to fish, mammals, and even to such inanimate articles as blankets or skins. [224] [226] Even a tiny morsel placed on a weir will attract numerous salmon, or if set on a trap will prove an infallible lure to animals. When put in the owner's box, valuables will be attracted to it as steel to a magnet. Thus the fortunate possessor will be able to give many potlatches and to reach a high position in the community. [432] Since this good fortune is

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quently not until the fourth appearance that a person obtains supernatural good luck, he is still hoping for two more visitations, the second of which he expects to be fruitful.

One day as he was poling up the Kimsquit River he heard a sound resembling thunder proceeding from a log-jam. From descriptions given him by his father, he knew that this must be the voice of a *mātsqus*, but, not having observed ceremonial chastity, he was afraid to investigate, although the sound seemed to follow his canoe for a considerable distance; it only stopped when another canoe approached. From the fact that he alone heard the voice, he knew that it was for him that the creature had come and only the arrival of other people had deterred it from appearing.

On another occasion the same man was close to the nest of a *mātsqus*. He and another hunter were together in the forest above the Dean River and both saw the stone nest behind a waterfall, but for some time each refrained from pointing it out to the other. Towards dusk the first man's attention was called to it by his companion, and they debated on a course of action. Each was desirous of obtaining the benefits to be derived from a successful use of the nest, but each was afraid of the evil consequences should he fail. The friend had observed continence for some time so it was decided that in the morning he should be the one to make the approach; the other man, well versed in these matters, instructed him very carefully what to do. That night both men were too excited to sleep.

Next morning the nest was still in the same place, but the friend hesitated about going up to it, and as they delayed, talking, it vanished in the twinkling of an eye and the opportunity passed.

The nest itself is sufficiently potent to bring good fortune without the *mātsqus*. Not many years ago a man saw one containing a large green egg which he touched with one end of his musket. Then he carefully hid his weapon for one year in a cleft of the rocks where no water could reach it, nor did he mention what he had seen to anyone. When the time had

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777 elapsed, he fetched his musket from its hiding-place and again
224 began to use it. Thenceforth he never missed his aim; every
shot brought down an animal.

Before the days of muskets good fortune could likewise be obtained by the discoverer of the nest of a *mätsqas*. Each contains small particles of the skin of all animals, including human beings, plucked from them in their sleep by humming birds and toads. The finder must touch the nest with his stick, such as is always carried by hunters, then break it and throw it away, saying as he does so:

"May I see you at . . . tomorrow." This means next year.

He names his favourite hunting-ground. The finder must
[785] not say anything to anyone about his discovery, and for one year he must observe continence. If he then goes to the locality mentioned, he will there find his stick, the one which he broke when he touched the nest, though it will be invisible to anyone else. Adhering to its end will be four hairs of the *mätsqas*. These he must hide for a year, wrapped in some of his own clothing, taking care that it is an article which he has long
[785] worn and which is accordingly saturated with his essence. During this period, too, he must observe continence. Two years after finding the nest, he will be able to hunt with phen-
[424] omenal success. The knowledge of this proper procedure has been handed down in an ancestral family for many generations.

777 On the occasion when the two men had seen the nest they
787 continued their journey, each chiding the other for his failure to take advantage of the opportunity put in his path. Before
[776] long they saw a footprint where no man had been and knew that it must be that of *Tsalälït*, the supernatural hunter of mountain goats. In spite of remonstrances, the comrade scraped up a little dirt from the track into his handkerchief. In this he did wrong, especially as he had failed to take advantage of the opportunity presented to him by the nest of the monster toad. That night as the two were encamped a slide
[761] came thundering down beside them, and they barely escaped with their lives. Not long afterwards the erring man died,

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These become lilies (of the species known as *lilkūndp* or *malilkwaltzālaxālāt*, "The most potent of the pond") from the roots of which a tonic can be brewed. They can be collected by anyone, and the places where they grow are well known, but certain rules must be followed. Before reaching the pond the gatherer must find four spruce saplings, cut from each a bough projecting eastward, and lay these two by two, beside the water, with a space between. After plucking the lily roots he must place them on the ground between the spruce branches and tie the whole into a bundle with strips of dyed and undyed cedar-bark. He must be careful to wind these wrappings clockwise. On arriving at the house where the tonic is to be prepared, the bundle must be thrown in through the smoke-vent, never carried through the door. After these precautions the medicine can be prepared with safety. The roots are cut into thin slices and boiled for four days; a sick person then drinks several cupsful of the brew, which is particularly good for the blood. This remedy is especially effective if the patient is observing ceremonial chastity. The person administering the potion sees to it that the one being treated conforms to certain regulations for forty days. He must not eat fresh meat, fresh salmon, or any food prepared by a widow or a catamenial woman; he must not approach too closely a girl who is secluded following puberty, and he must observe absolute continence, not even sleeping with his wife. Death follows the breaking of any of these taboos.

Although supernatural good fortune is most frequently obtained from either a *mātqaz* or a *nuiatl*, it can be derived from other supernatural beings. In such cases the acquisition is seldom dangerous. The following tale describes the *gokāx-i*.

Long before the coming of the white man, but very long after the first people came to this earth, a certain Kimsquit man, *Wīlmaaxil*, who was also called *O'mātil*, was snaring mountain goats on Mount *Tzopēnāl* when he heard on the upper slopes a peculiar cry which he recognized, from descriptions given him by the old people, as the note of a *gokāx-i*.

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This is a supernatural bird about the size of a crow, with a broad hooked beak and blue-black iridescent plumage. Its note resembles that of a swan. The peculiarity of the bird is that its flesh and bones are of mountain goat grease; even its droppings are of this valuable substance, and it is these which are specially prized. Long ago *ɋoḵăn-i* were comparatively common, but all have now fled beyond the range of the white man's rifle.

Wĭkwanuĭl knew what to do, so he crept stealthily up the mountain armed only with his hunting stick. Presently he saw a *ɋoḵăn-i* feeding on a mountain goat which had been caught in one of his snares. It answered to the descriptions *Wĭkwanuĭl* had heard, and he could see that its droppings were like solidified mountain goat grease. The hunter crawled near, and took advantage of the instant when the bird was within the goat's stomach to leap forward and club it as it looked up. *Wĭkwanuĭl* twisted the neck until the head separated from the body and flung the former behind him, to the right, without noting where it went. This enables the bird to return since, like all other living creatures, when it seems to die it does no more than shed its cloak of flesh. Then the hunter cut the body into halves, threw the right portion in the same direction as the head, and carefully tied the left half in his cape of cedar-bark. Next he collected the droppings and wrapped them in evergreen boughs. Carefully carrying his treasures, he went down the mountain, and hid them in a niche cut in the trunk of a cedar tree, before he went home.

Next day, *Wĭkwanuĭl* did not hunt but returned to the place, drew out the piece of the bird's body, and dried it over a fire, as if he were toasting salmon for winter use. At night he went home, still refraining from telling anyone what he had done. For four days he cured the meat, then carefully closed the niche and went away.

For one year *Wĭkwanuĭl* did not hunt. Then he reopened the recess and saw that the meat was fresh and juicy, as if newly prepared. He left it in place, but drew forth the droppings and carried them off in a small bag. Fortune followed him. By using a small piece of the solidified grease on his traps he had wonderful success. At length *Wĭkwanuĭl* told his fellow-villagers what he had obtained and they were envious of his good luck. He continued to prosper, and at last sold the droppings for a large amount of goods, though he carefully preserved the section of the body itself. When an old man, he showed his son where it was concealed and the latter likewise prospered throughout his life, owing to this possession. When he became old, he in turn told his son about it, so that the young man had the same good fortune as his father and grand-

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father. But the great-grandson was too lazy to take the trouble of going with his father to the place where the section of the bird was hidden, so the treasure was lost.

A fourth giver of supernatural good fortune is one of the mythical creatures termed *snuiz*. This variety lives in the ocean, or rarely in rivers, and can occasionally be seen resting on the surface with its long, golden tresses floating on the water. The hair appears always to be flecked with eagle down, but in reality it is a mass of barnacles, the equivalent of this substance to this under-sea dweller. If the observer is brave, he will paddle cautiously near until he can twist a lock of the hair around his paddle and break it off. He must not touch it with his hands, but must dangle it outside the canoe, still wrapped about his paddle, until he reaches the shore, when he must conceal it in some lonely place for one year. After that period he can use a single hair, or piece of one, as bait; it will be enough to attract animals to his traps or salmon to his weir, exactly as with the mountain goat grease ceremonial of a *qakdn-i* or a stick that has come in contact with a giant toad. If the person who has jerked off the hair with his paddle should be foolish or ignorant enough to bring his spoil into his canoe, he, and all with him, are rendered incapable of movement and the craft with its occupants sinks beneath the sea.

The father's cousin of an informant once saw one of these animals when paddling in company with several companions to Kimsquit. The sea was smooth as glass when their attention was attracted by a number of small ripples, spreading in a half-moon shape from what they realized was the head of a *snuiz*. The hair crossed the ripples, but did not rise or fall with them. The back of the animal's head was nearest the canoe so the opportunity seemed favourable for obtaining some of its hair. Cautiously the men paddled nearer, but at the last moment the steersman feared to drive the canoe in among the golden tresses, so veered off and the craft passed along one side of the mass of hair. The animal had shown no sign of being aware of their presence, but it now began to turn away,

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"It seems as if you attracted the salmon like a magnet," said the father to his son.

The latter did not answer immediately, but later he said:

"You were right," and he told him what had happened.

"You have obtained supernatural good luck," the old man replied simply.

Following his son's instructions the father prepared canoe and house to bring back the flesh of the Mother of Snakes. They collected every scrap of it, which they preserved very carefully, and most small portions as bait to attract salmon to their weir with such success that they became wealthy.

Another supernatural being from whom supernatural good fortune may be obtained is *Nēmaxē'ōx*, "The Female Monster." When a chief dies she comes to wail, wandering through the woods near the village, where sometimes she can be seen in the form of a weeping woman. As she cries, she ejects mucus from her nose, which solidifies into a glass-like substance about a foot in length. Anyone who sees her should take the transformed mucus, and wrap it in some article of his own clothing; it will bring him good fortune. About midnight of June 11, 1910, the infant daughter of a Bella Coola died, and about seven o'clock on the following morning the wailing was heard in the woods behind the missionary's house. The brother of the dead child's father rushed off to try to find the weeping one. Luckily he did not succeed, because he did not know about collecting the mucus, and trouble would have come to him had he seen the supernatural being without knowing how to deal with it; in fact, even to hear *Nēmaxē'ōx* is considered an omen of death.

It will be seen from the foregoing specific instances that supernatural good luck is usually obtained by the slaying of some powerful creature. But, since every living creature is endowed with superhuman power, it follows that any object obtained from a bird or an animal that has acted in a peculiar way may be the cause of supernatural good fortune if it be kept for one year in the manner previously described. Some

When the Bella Coola believe that it was heard, the incident is recorded as a fact.

[illegible] stone a man finds a piece of the thick bark of the fir in one of his traps. If he throw it away nothing happens, but if he conceal it in a hidden enemy for one year and then use it for bait he will have supernatural good luck. Another bringer of good fortune is a green rock, about two feet in diameter, sometimes found far in the forest. There is no danger attached to the appearance of either of these manifestations of the supernatural, which have merely the potential ability to bestow good fortune if the person using them knows and practises the proper ritual.

Sometimes, long ago, when a number of seals were seen approaching the shore a man would notice that they were peculiar. One would disappear beneath the surface, to emerge as a beaver, the beaver would vanish beneath the waves only to come up as a bear, a mountain goat, a deer, or some other animal. If a hunter wished to have phenomenal success at goat hunting, for example, he would wait until one of the seals appeared as a goat and then kill it. The carcass would drift ashore, as a seal, but on being cut open a stone shaped like a mountain goat would always be found in the stomach. To obtain success the hunter would wrap this in a piece of worn clothing, and hide it away beneath an overhanging ledge in some lonely spot in the woods. If left there for one year the stone became a magnet, and its owner, carrying it with him on his hunting expeditions, had amazing success. He had obtained supernatural good fortune, for one particular object. If, after carving upon the seal-mountain goat, the hunter failed to wrap up the stone in some of his clothing it vanished of its own accord.

The last Bella Coola to have supernatural good luck from this source was *Wiede*, who died about 1900. His extraordinary success as a hunter was derived from a number of stones which his father had obtained from the stomachs of seals in the form of land animals. His prosperity ended when he sold his collection of stones to a Bella Bella man who still uses them with great effect.

of these demi-gods of antiquity are favourite themes for stories. The powers of the later shamans have been far less than those of their forefathers, and their exploits have been of a somewhat different character. Hence it is possible to divide the subject into three sections:

(a) Shamanism in the distant past.
(b) Modern shamanism.
(c) Shamans from the dead.

[illegible]

Information on this phase is contained in stories and a few sentences which describe the achievements of ancient demi-gods, endowed with miraculous powers of various kinds. The tales are similar in type to those dealing with the granting of supernatural aid to the unfortunate, so that it is in many cases difficult to differentiate them. As might be expected these narratives are not exact. Frequently the teller does not know from what being the ancient shaman received his power, nor can he explain the abilities described, which are different from, and superior to, those with which he is familiar. In fact it is customary to describe any mythical hero as a shaman.

Tales of this kind can be related by any one; they are not the personal property of a specific family. Many of them, that of [illegible], for example, are well known and are told and retold commonly.

In addition to information obtained from stories, a few isolated facts are remembered regarding ancient shamans. It is thought that various taboos connected with hunting were [illegible] by them in the distant past. Such restrictions and injunctions were firmly believed in and strictly adhered to until a few years ago, and many of them are still observed. The usual method of hunting harlequin ducks is, or was until recently, from a canoe, with a sapling set up in the bow to hide the hunter, attached with bow and arrow in readiness; several shamans, however, were able to kill the birds by merely waving the butt-end of a paddle towards them. Such power

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So he sang, smoke could be seen rising from behind the house, the youth could see that it came from Porcupine's fire, but the song explained that it was eagle down for their mental guest. The singer repeated his song; more smoke ascended from another place, which the lad saw was Mountain Goat's fire. The song was sung again and again, and at each repetition new smoke could be seen, from the fires of Deer, Black Bear, Weasel, Marten, Beaver, Wolverine, in fact from all animals except Grizzly Bear. The chief explained to his guest that wherever he wanted meat he could go hunting and would be able to see the smoke rising from the fires of various animals.[1]

"Tomorrow you will return home," he continued. "Your brothers (meaning the four wolves that had saved him) will go with you to carry some presents."[2]

Next morning (it was really a year later) the wolves cut up piles of smoked meat in blankets woven of goat wool and gave blankets of ermine, black bear, and marten. The meat, though a large quantity, was reduced to so small a compass that the five animals carried it without difficulty. The five travelled back to the spot where the two brothers had sat down to make their ascension, and at that point the wolves returned to their home.

Now to the five rose the lad remembered his brother, and began to weep bitterly, thinking that he must be dead. But presently he heard the sound of footsteps inside the cave through which the porcupine had guided him, that grew nearer, until the younger boy emerged. The elder was overjoyed, but his delight was turned to dismay when he saw that his brother's face was green and haggard, with a strange expression, that he had lost all the flesh from his body, and that his clothes, the same that he had worn when they parted company, were now in tatters. His brother's appearance affected him so much that he fell down dead. The younger lad, however, had been made a shaman by the dead, so he quickly restored his brother. They exchanged experiences, the younger saying that the dead had given him the name K'quite. His appearance was vastly improved when he had himself in a black bear blanket and ermine skates brought to the other from the village of the wolves. The two returned home, entering the house secretly and lying down as one

[1] It is noteworthy that the myths even associate the five Bella Coola tribal totems of animals and insects with five different forms. To the ordinary person they appear as totems, but to myths they have from everything these of humans having houses, fires, blankets, and other comforts. An individual who is able to see the smoke of these fires will have no difficulty in finding the homes of the animals and hence will have great success in hunting. The spirit who lifts the lad was in every case Grizzly Bear, who was or there that assuming the result to dangerous.

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in his sleep, and hopes that it will grant him specific supernatural power. He realizes that he could increase the probability of obtaining this by ceremonial chastity, and believes that it would come to him if he went alone to the woods and kept fasting for some time. Another means would be to concentrate his thoughts upon the desired end, but X is too good a Christian to do so; he is in the unhappy position of knowing each of two religions to be able to practise either unsuccessfully. Such experiences are not likely to occur to any but a man of high-strung, imaginative temperament, to whom dreams and mental excitements appear especially vivid. X is intensely religious, so that it is easy for him to interpret every phenomenon in terms of the supernatural. It will be noted that most of the dreams just described took place when he was sick, precisely the time when hallucinations are to be expected. They were more coherent than those of most Bella Coola, though the difference is one of degree rather than of kind.

Most dreams are comparatively simple, and the information received in them is intelligible. They come to all, irrespective of rank or prerogative. Nevertheless, it is believed that an inheritable tendency runs in some families; this does not mean that all members of such a group dream constantly, but they are more likely to do so than others. Those occurring at the winter solstice are more carefully observed than at other times, since it is then that the supernatural beings decide events for the coming year and a man's spirit may be able to inform him of what has been decided. Consequently, as soon as *Sqoaiēm* enters *Nusmāl-a*, wise men separate from their wives and concentrate on dreaming, hoping to learn what is in store for them. For instance, if a man sees himself seated before a large pile of goods, he knows that he will have the good fortune to do this during the coming year; on the other hand, if he forms ill luck, it means that he will be unfortunate. Another time when dreams are especially desired is before the summer solstice when hunters in particular observe ceremonial chastity. This purification not only increases the likelihood of such

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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experiences, but adds to the reliability of their prognostications. At that season, if a hunter dreams that he will not be successful, he remains at home knowing that it will be useless for him to seek game.

Though dreams are considered and remembered most carefully at the solstices, it must not be imagined that they are disregarded at other seasons. Often there is neither mental picture nor apparition, merely a voice, the sound of which indicates that the hearer will be fortunate the following day. Instead of a voice without body, a dream may consist of a speechless apparition which indicates by gestures the fate in store for the dreamer. One elderly Bella Coola who keeps a small shop states that he can usually tell in this way whether or not he will sell much goods during the coming day. Many years ago, after frequent visits from a being of this kind, the man became the leading fisherman for one of the canneries; he attributed his success to his nameless benefactor, for whose benefit he threw a number of small pieces of food into the fire. Occasionally, specific information or advice is received. On one occasion, when this same man was ill, he dreamt that a supernatural being appeared and told him to wash in the river, that it was breath to all human beings; he did so regularly, and was soon restored to health. Sometimes the information is with regard to the future. On the night of January 15, 1914, he dreamt that two naked Carriers were standing beside his bed. He asked them what they wanted, and why they were without clothing.

"We always appear as an omen of trouble in the land," they answered.

Next day there was a heavy fall of snow which he regarded as fulfilling the prophecy. The dreamer was X., the man of imaginative temperament who had beheld the white and black supernatural beings. These instances illustrate the manner in which the same individual has repeated experiences of similar type. X. claims that he began to dream when a small child,

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and that his mother stated that all her ancestors had done likewise.

Another instance of advice conveyed in this manner was told by a Kimsquit man who related that a number of years ago a pregnant woman had dreamed that *Alquntám* appeared to her and told her not to destroy what she would presently bear. In due course she was delivered, but the infant was a repulsive cripple, blind and deformed. Remembering the admonition, the mother refused to slay her child as many of her friends advised. Soon it was apparent that he was supernaturally endowed; as proof of this he repeated comments which had been made to his mother within a few minutes of his birth. As he grew older he developed shamanistic powers so that he was able to converse with the dead, the only instance known of this ability being granted from birth. He also had wonderful talent as a singer and, though he must have died about 1850, the Bella Coola still recount his skill in this respect. He would unquestionably have been killed but for his mother's warning.

Instead of imparting verbal information, dreams frequently foretell the future by means of images of events about to happen. For example, if a man dreams of owning large numbers of pelts, it signifies that he will have success in hunting, and he starts for his trap-line without delay. So, too, warnings are conveyed. A number of years ago a slave woman of *Sunā*, who was not a member of the *Sunā* society, dreamt that she saw herself blown in many pieces and lying covered with blood. Within a few days she met a Cannibal dancer (II, p. 72), who was supposed to have vanished into the land above; he killed her and lacerated her body, as she had seen. A Kimsquit man told of a similar instance that happened to a member of the party with which he had been hunting a number of years previously. One night he was wakened by one of his companions, *Tsēlēs*, calling out that he was afraid because he had dreamt that one side of their canoe was shattered. The hunters were impressed, because they knew he had long ob-

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If a woman dreams that she has caught two salmon, two small birds, or is holding two infants, the birth of twins is foretold. This type of explanation is obvious; in fact, these examples lie on the border-line between direct and symbolic interpretations.

Another indication of approaching pregnancy is for a woman to dream of a dead relative; this means that the latter will soon be re-born. An elderly Kimsquit man mentioned that some fifty years earlier his mother dreamt that her dead mother came to her, saying that she was lonesome and wished to return. Soon afterwards she conceived, and the daughter born was considered to be the reincarnation of her own grandmother whose name she was promptly given. At the present time, this informant addresses his sister as sister, though he states that as a child he was taught to call her grandmother. As already mentioned, if a new-born infant is a reincarnation, the fact can often be recognized by holes or dimples in the ears, relics of previous borings for rings. Unless such a birth has been foretold in a dream, it is impossible to know whom the child re-embodies.

A dream of frequent occurrence in Bella Coola is the return of the sleeper to the scenes and activities of his childhood. This always signifies a long life. Strangely enough, to dream of being nailed in one's coffin and carried to the grave is translated conversely, and likewise indicates a long life. It is remembered that there were many dreams of fire before the outbreak of the smallpox epidemic, so it has since been assumed that such presage an outbreak of this disease.

The only dreams of which the interpretations are wholly symbolic are those experienced by hunters. The Bella Coola explain this by saying that hunters always observe ceremonial chastity and their spirits are, therefore, in a receptive condition to supernatural impressions. When a man has set his traps, he is able to tell from his dreams whether or not any animals have been caught.

To dream that a canoe has been upset in the river and that

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a lad has been drowned in spite of efforts to rescue him, means that a beaver has been caught.

To dream of seeing a *hamat* dancer in full costume means that a fisher, lynx, wolverine, mountain goat, wolf, or black bear has been caught.

To dream of fighting people, especially if arrows are used, means that a grizzly bear has been caught.

To dream of playing children means that deer will be seen the following day.

To dream of swimming means that an otter has been caught.

To dream of fondling a woman and playing with her breasts means that a marten has been caught.

Obscene dreams mean that squirrels or pack-rats have been caught.

To dream of a woman with whom the hunter has held illicit intercourse means that absolutely nothing has been caught.

Until recent years these interpretations were believed without question and no hunter bothered to examine his conscience before he had received such indications of success. A hunter's wife likewise obtains information of her husband's fortune in dreams.

All dreams cannot be translated. One man, for example, related that in his sleep he had often seen a supernatural being enter his house, turn to the left, pick up one of the heavy floor boards and carry it around the fire as if it had been a toy. The apparition always told him to do likewise, but though he has tried repeatedly in his dreams, he has always found it too heavy. Such an image might serve a shaman as theme for a dramatic performance, though, of course, the element of curing the sick would be lacking. Another dream experienced several times by the same man when ill is that of being carried with the speed of light to a flat land somewhat similar to this, but located on the top of a range of lofty mountains. It contains numerous grassy meadows studded with trees of which the

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[illegible] "The Elders," and have spoken of him as the oldest of all animals. He gave guide and:

"I am going to help you to account of your woes. Henceforth you will be able to see the smoke rising from the houses of the different animals."

Thanks to the assistance vouchsafed to him, the lad was able to save his family from starvation.

THE FETUNATE GLUTTON[1]

About four generations up there was living in Bella Coola a young man who had a prodigious appetite. He used to eat everything, including vast quantities of rotten salmon eggs and other putrid foods until arms, face, and stomach all became fat, oily, and flabby, and he gave off an offensive smell. He was a chief and had married a chief's daughter, but she left him because of his gross and stench. Then he took another girl, who in turn deserted him. So parents arranged for him one marriage after another until he had become the husband of every available chief's daughter, but not one would stay with him because of his objectionable odour. Finally he wedded a poor girl who alone remained faithful and bore him a child. The glutton determined to improve his appearance. Accordingly, he obtained a large quantity of mountain goat grease and eagle feathers, then, taking one with him, he left the village and his family without saying whither he was going, in fact, he did not know himself.

He went up the west bank of the Nuskatsumeen River until it became a mere brook, then crossed over and returned down the east bank, covering his path with eagle feathers. Then he went up the north bank of the Bella Coola River, protecting every affluent coming from the north, in each case he went to the west bank, crossed the stream when it had become a rivulet and descended on the east side, all the time leaving behind him a trail of eagle feathers, and all the time eating nothing but the goat grease which he carried with him. When he had penetrated far into the upper reaches of Bella Coola River, he crossed it and descended to south bank, attempting all tributaries as before. Near the Whitewater he heard a chorus of young girls singing happily, and a little below this place he came his own village.

[illegible] Bella Coola legend, animals appear to boast how to marriage only. They really have their own lives, dances, and other forms of activity in which they partake to human shape. If one who is fortunate enough to obtain supernatural aid watching him is not disturbed from their houses one easily learns them, and thus have phenomenal success hunting.

[illegible] another version of this story see Boas, p. 108.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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* 539 * 787 his identity until, last of all, came his faithful wife with their child. He returned to her and in the course of time became wealthy.

THE GOOD FORTUNE OF *Tsnielitl*

Long, long ago, there lived at Kimsquit a very successful hunter whose name was *Tsnielitl*. One day, during a great famine, he went into the mountains carrying, like all hunters, a walking-stick about eight feet long.[1] *Tsnielitl* met *Tsnalitlk*, the supernatural hunter, who like himself was carrying a stick and was accompanied by a dog. *Tsnalitlk* greeted him:

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"I hereby give you good fortune. Let us exchange sticks. Do not hunt until tomorrow, then make the motion of hurling my staff at mountain goats and they will fall dead."

"I am delighted," *Tsnielitl* replied. *Tsnalitlk* continued:

"I must give you some instructions. When you leave this spot do not go either up or down; keep on the same level around the mountain. When you hunt tomorrow, first kill a porcupine, because he is the oldest of all animals. If you fail to do so, you will lose your power."

Then *Tsnalitlk* vanished, and *Tsnielitl* moved on, taking care neither to go up or down. Presently the spot on which he had been standing fell away in a landslide, such as is caused only by *Tsnalitlk* or a friend. Famous hunters have sometimes seen *Tsnalitlk*'s stick moving, or the impressions of it on the ground, and from these visions have gained extraordinary ability to see game; but *Tsnielitl* alone obtained supernatural good fortune from this hunter, owing to the stick given to him. The exchange was of equal value to *Tsnalitlk*, since the staff which he obtained was as potent among supernatural beings as his among mortals. *Tsnielitl* was especially lucky, obtaining, as he did, supernatural good fortune on two separate occasions.

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When he returned home he concealed the stick in a tree, though there was really no need for doing so, because, as a supernatural possession, it was invisible to ordinary mortals. He did not tell his wife what had happened to him, and she was very angry at him when, for a whole year, he did not have to provide his family with food; this was because he remembered that to the supernatural ones "tomorrow" means "next year." It was a time of famine, and the family of *Tsnielitl* was saved from starvation only by the food which he had stored up previously. When a year had elapsed he went hunting, spending four days in procuring a porcupine before pursuing other game. His success was prodigious, in fact but for his efforts the whole village would have been

[1] Whistle of hemlock, spruce, or fir, never of cedar.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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blotted out by starvation.* His fame was so great that many people brought their infant daughters to him as wives.

Tsnishit had a brother and a sister. The former, whose name was *Sinex*, was driven by famine to *Kwiquasit* in the country of the *setting* people below Kimsquit. Here he, too, obtained supernatural good fortune from *Tsnishit*, in exactly the same way as his brother, and like him saved the whole population from starvation. The sister had been married to a Bella Coola, by whom she had two daughters. When one of them, a girl about fifteen years old, had starved to death, the people determined to abandon their village and seek refuge with *Sinex* among the *setting*. On the way there, they camped on the shore of Labouchere Channel, where the remaining daughter was bitten on the arm by a pack-rat, as she lay sleeping beside her mother in a cave. Weakened by lack of food the mother died, and her husband abandoned her corpse and his injured daughter. Some time later a party of Bella Coola chanced to land at the same spot, found the deserted girl still alive, and carried her to her mother's brother, who looked after her. Though angry at his sister's husband, he did not wish to start a feud; to have done so would have grieved his sister, as well as have shown disrespect for the man his dead sister had loved.

During the four years that the famine lasted no berries ripened and there was a universal lack of food of every kind. Soon after it had ended, *Tsnishit* went to the Bella Coola town of *Alqaikut* to obtain a second wife. He married a young woman, but for almost a year neither slept with her nor went hunting, omissions which so angered her mother that she visited him one day for his failure to carry on his previous occupation. Annoyed by her criticism, *Tsnishit* left the house. Several of those who had heard her upbraided the old woman for speaking harshly to the famous hunter and her daughter joined in the chorus of disapproval. Although it was winter, *Tsnishit* caught four geese which he carried home, using his blanket as a pack, and dumped them on the floor before his mother-in-law without saying a word. She fell dead instantly; the sudden strain had caused the spirit to leave her body. *Tsnishit* might have used the stick obtained from *Tsnishit*, which had in it the power of life and death, but inasmuch as he had merely used the accumulated power which was his through long continuance. In fact he never disclosed the power of his stick.

*The method of hunting introduced by *Tsnishit* has since been employed by all who hunters. Whenever a porcupine is seen the observer calls it, saying:

"Please, may your younger brothers and sisters come."

A man always tries to kill a porcupine when he starts on a hunting trip, and if one should appear when he is starting bigger game he will stop to kill it, knowing that the chase on quest will not be crowned.

1:McIlwraith E-9 (1922-1924) 1948
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sons, of whom the eldest was about sixteen, though old enough to appreciate the slights put upon their father, could do nothing to defend him.

On a winter day one of these lads felt impelled to follow a trail down the north side of the Bella Coola valley along the edge of salt water. The weather had been cold for some time, but on this day it was so warm that he lay down to doze on the warm rocks. Near his head was a small opening which connected with a long passage to the ocean, and through this he presently heard the known knocking of clinging seals. His hunting desires aroused, he went to the edge of the steep crag overlooking the sea and dived in. He bravely penetrated into a narrow passage which led him under the rocks, until with his last gasp he emerged into a cave where there were countless seals. Waiting only a moment, and without disturbing the animals, he dived back through the passage safely.

When he reached home the lad said nothing about what he had seen, but that evening he began to make a seal-spear of the usual type with a wooden handle and a bone point. He asked his father to help him with this carpentry task, and his mother to make a rope for the harpoon-head. Though surprised at their son's energy, the parents did as he requested, but the fellow-villagers mocked at his efforts, for the lad was no hunter.

Next morning he asked his father to accompany him, and the two set off in a canoe, carrying the spear which had been made the previous evening. Before starting, the lad requested one of his brothers to have a fire ready for cooking the seal that night. Further and on paddled to the entrance of the subterranean passage, though the old man was, of course, ignorant of its existence. The elder told him to wait, and dived overboard, armed only with a club, for the seal-spear had really been unnecessary. He penetrated through the passage and at once killed a seal pup, less than year, with which he returned to the canoe. The lad explained nothing to his father, so that it seemed to the latter as if his son had dived down into the depths and there slain a seal, after remaining below for an amazingly long time.

When the two returned to the village they were greeted with a shout of laughter at the small size of their quarry. In derision, the villagers took the pup from them and threw it from hand to hand, as a ball.

As already described, it is customary whenever a man kills a deer, a mountain goat, several seals, or any other large game, for him to invite his fellows to a feast. The number of guests depends on the size of the quarry, but in all cases the chiefs are the first to be invited and anyone who fails to do so is laughed at for his stinginess. On this occasion the seal-pup was obviously so small that any general invitation to partake of it was ludicrous. Nevertheless, the lad sent a herald to invite not only

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brother the proper methods of hunting, and how to find bears when strengthened by chastity, without which no hunter can have success. He alone of her brothers was worthy to learn this, because he was still solitary. Among other things she taught him never to hunt bears with arrows feathered with owl feathers, because she had been told by her husband that one of his fellows shot with such a missile would remain dead, whereas one slain with an arrow tipped with feathers from any other bird would be reborn.

The woman and her youngest brother hunted constantly, and always returned with skins which they shared with everyone. The other three brothers were very jealous, though their own lack of success was due to their laziness, and failure to observe ceremonial chastity. At intervals the bear used to visit his human mate, and after a year or more she went away with him, never to return.

THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED A BEAR

(*Second Version*)

Long, long ago, a Carrier Indian girl was walking along a path at the back of the village when she saw some black bear's dung. She looked to see who could be passing about.

"Who is so dirty as to defecate here?"

Then she wiped her feet on the grass and went on. Presently, she met a handsome, well-dressed man, a stranger, who asked her if she had recently met anyone.

"No," she replied.

He invited the girl to come and visit him in his house, and she agreed to do so. The trail was long, but in fact it seemed short, owing to his power. Arrived at his house, the stranger asked her to marry him and she consented. When it was bed-time the girl collected soft hemlock boughs to sleep upon.

"I never use such stuff," said her new majesty, so she went out again and brought back devil's club, and gooseberry bushes, saying to him:

"I cannot lie on these."

"I always do," he replied.

Then, the man broke her collect fire wood, and she brought some dry sticklets from a slide, but he said:

"That does not build the fires," and he sent her out again.

This time she brought back stones and he was pleased.

"That is good," he said, "I always use them. Now let us have a meal."

"I don't see anything to eat," she replied, but her husband pulled out

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It is said that one man accidentally sucked when spitting on a toad, and swallowed the creature. It lived within his stomach for fifty years, causing no discomfort though its master could feel it moving, and its singing could be heard at intervals. This brought him no supernatural power, although he was enabled by it to live to a great age. When at last he died, the toad came hopping out of his throat and was carried respectfully to the river by his friends who covered the creature with eagle down and dyed and undyed cedar-bark.

Some of the rites already described with regard to seals and fish are similar in nature to this medicine.

To Cause Obesity

A medicine was formerly used by chiefs to make them fat and important-looking, but details of it have been forgotten.

To Cause Ability in Singing

Catch an unborn (?carried through?) alive and put it near the throat of the woman to whom it is desired to impart the art, saying:

"May she be a singer like you."

Release the bird and the woman will become a good singer.

This bird is considered by the Bella Coola to be the best singer among British Columbia birds, and they say that many animals and fish, including even the killer, seek to hear its singing.

To Cause Ability in Hunting

There is a poisonous plant which, when eaten, almost kills the user. If he recovers, he is henceforth endowed with ability as a hunter. The species could not be ascertained.

To Cause Change in Weather

If a mild wind is desired: Have the penis of a mouse, goat or beaver cut off.

If rain is desired: Wash the penis of a large bear and throw it into the water or a river, saying:

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that the proximity of such intensely human articles is enough to counteract and render powerless anything of a superhuman nature. Likewise, when a certain woman came in contact with the War-Party of the Tides and began to exhibit symptoms of insanity, she was cured by drinking water in which other women had squeezed out their menstrual pads. Another defence is the burning of dried salmon, fumigation from which is particularly effective for one who suffers from nightmares. Other remedies already mentioned are to cut the right leg and smear a bullet with the resultant blood in order to kill a *cnoq*, and to lacerate the inside of the mouth and spit to withstand a capsizing mountain.

The medicine most commonly taken is false hellebore, the use of which was learnt by some ancient shaman. At dusk a hunter should eat a small twig of it, raw; it draws from his stomach everything injurious, particularly women's hairs, which are abhorred by animals, and ensures him success on the morrow. If he takes too much of it, he becomes ill and must swallow the antidote, mountain goat grease or marrow. He should also carry twigs of the plant with him, ready either to swallow or throw in the direction of any dreaded supernatural being whom he may encounter. Eagle down and dried salmon roe are sometimes similarly used.

The powers of a person who has obtained supernatural ability, whether or not he is a shaman, can be destroyed by similar means. For example, a lad treated so that he understands the speech of ravens, will lose his ability if he eats food cooked or prepared by a menstruating woman, by one who has lost her husband within the last year, or if he passes through the hole in the floor used by an adolescent girl. The last Bella Coola with this skill was deafened to the meaning of the birds' croaking by lying near his sister one night for warmth, since her mere proximity was enough to nullify his power. This aspect of medicine merges with taboos. So, too, the power of an object can be destroyed by washing; an instance of this is

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phases of activity, leaving here only certain rules about diet and a number of prohibitions which hunters must observe.

FOOD TABOOS OBSERVED BY WOMEN

Women must not eat bear meat. To do so would derange the ceremonia and cause profuse growth of hair.

Women of child-bearing age must not eat beaver. To do so would cause a difficult delivery.

A woman of child-bearing age must not eat roasted salmon until the sticks have been removed which hold it in front of the fire. She will bear twins if this injunction is disregarded.

TABOOS OBSERVED BY HUNTERS

No hunter or fisherman may leave the village in the morning if he has been foolish enough to break the night's fast. It is customary to depart at dawn and take a small meal when nearing the hunting or fishing-ground.

No hunter may drink water in which dog salmon have been soaked. Animals dislike this liquid and avoid a man with it in his stomach.

When traps have been set, and a party of hunters is sitting around the camp-fire in the evening, no one must pass between it and one of his fellows. If this should be done, heedlessly, animals would disregard the bait that has been set out.

When mountain goat hunters are travelling, the most expert must lead the party. When he sits down, so must the others, and no one can change places with him. This is said to be a custom of the Carriers as well as of the Bella Coola.

When a hunter is cutting up a bear, he must be careful not to cut a vein which is said to run across the chest and down each fore-paw. To do so causes sickness.

When a hunter kills a bear, he must place either the skull or the whole head in a tree near the scene of the kill, otherwise he will become blind. In some families, the man removes only an eye, places it in a notched stick and set this under an over-

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224 [232] hanging rack where no rain can penetrate. Long ago, some hunter failed to do this and became blind in consequence, hence the rite has since been carried out.

When a hunter is in the field, his wife must not swing. To do this causes him to go up into lofty and dangerous places as she rises on the swing, and also destroys the power laboriously accumulated by ceremonial chastity.

Ritual Acts

196 226 789 Ceremonialism is an extremely important aspect of Bella Coola life, but most of their rites are social or religious rather than magical, so that descriptions of them belong to other chapters. In connection with the taking of the first oolachen and salmon, however, a number of ritual acts are performed to bring about desired ends; the element of propitiation is not entirely absent, but on the whole they may be considered as magical.

RITES CONNECTED WITH THE FIRST OOLACHEN

226 196 574 At the height of the oolachen run, the fish are so abundant that they can be taken profitably in large purse-nets. They do not, however, come simultaneously, and eager fishermen keep watching for their arrival and catching the straggling fore-runners in hand dip-nets. These fish must not be eaten immediately. Each fisherman arranges a hut in the front part of his house in which he deposits them as taken; if several men are doing this in a single dwelling, one hut for each will be arranged near the front door. Whenever a dance is held, eagle down is blown over the receptacle to placate the oolachen and prevent them from being disturbed by the noise. As soon as a man has caught enough for a feast, he invites all his fellows to his house and the fish are distributed. It is taboo for any woman to share this meal, and it is most improper for a man to summon his neighbours until he has enough oolachen to allow each guest to carry home a plentiful supply for his family. In former times, there used to be a number of meals of this kind,

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"I suppose you have been misbehaving with the lad," he continued. "That is the meaning of your anger."

"Yes," replied his wife. "What are you going to do about it?"

Tsuklilit said no more, nor did he show any resentment; instead he hospitably prepared a comfortable bed for the youth.

"Don't go to sleep," *Ahnenmoqu* whispered to him. "If he gets a chance, Tsuklilit always kills my lovers, and unless you keep awake he will murder you. When he yawns, you do the same."

As darkness settled down Tsuklilit yawned noisily, saying:

"When I have been out on the mountains all day it makes me yawn, but I cannot go to sleep."

"It affects me the same way," answered the young man, as he too yawned noisily.

This continued for hours; whenever Tsuklilit yawned the youth imitated him, and neither went to sleep.

It was down before Tsuklilit fell asleep and began to snore. *Ahnenmoqu* had warned the lad what to do if this happened, so he rose silently, took Tsuklilit's stick,* which was placed upright beside the sleeper, and pointed it at him. Tsuklilit died instantly, as this was the weapon with which he was wont to kill mountain goats by merely pointing.

Up to this time Tsuklilit had always slain his wife's lovers by causing the planks beneath the bed to turn over so that the occupant was precipitated down a chasm, at the bottom of which there was a pile of bones of those he had murdered in this way. It was because *Ahnenmoqu* loved the lad that she not only saved him but showed him how to kill her husband.

The young man did not return to his home, but continued to live with *Ahnenmoqu*, who made him immortal. He assumed the name and occupation of Tsuklilit and it is he who has been seen by fortunate hunters even within recent years. If the evil old Tsuklilit had not been destroyed there would still be many casualties, but his successor, himself once a hunter, is of a kindly disposition and often gives aid to mortals in their pursuit of game. The old people used to say that unless Tsuklilit helped a hunter he would be unable to kill mountain goats at all.

THE MURDER OF *Tsuklilit*
(Second Version)

Long ago hunters ventured into the mountains in pursuit of goats

*A straight stick about seven feet long such as is carried by all hunters when they go into the mountains to assist them in climbing. Tsuklilit always carries one.

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2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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ment was intense. One of the chiefs told two boys who were excellent shots to fire, but another interrupted, saying:

"This is too weighty a matter for mere lads."

He himself covered *Sukatmdn-a* and made ready to press the trigger. The murderer, seeing his fellow-tribesmen in the vicinity, tried to stall for time.

"Please do not shoot me," he called out. "I have always been terrified to die that way, please use a knife."

"Some of those you slew were probably terrified of muskets too," the self-appointed executioner grimly replied.

"Wait just a moment," *Sukatmdn-a* pleaded. "I want to speak to my kinsmen."

"So probably did several of those you shot," came the terse answer.

Then the chief fired and *Sukatmdn-a* fell dead. The Chilkotin were armed and seemed on the point of rushing forward to revenge their relative, but the chief took another musket, brandished it in their direction, and said:

"All right. The dogs will eat you too."

A Chilkotin chief pointed out that the Bella Coola were armed and in overwhelming numbers, so advised his angry followers to withdraw. Thus the incident closed without further bloodshed. Some state that *Sukatmdn-a*'s corpse was given to his relatives, others that it was buried by the *Sukasiut* alone in a large grave, beneath the body of *Nusmlsta*.

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A SUCCESSFUL HUNT

One September, between 1840 and 1850, a certain *Sānaxmdzots* was preparing for a potlatch. Taking twenty men with him as packers, he set out for mountain goats up the valley of the *Sāxlyaxuts*, which flows into the main Bella Coola from the north, nearly opposite Mount *Nusqulst*. They camped at a suitable spot, and for several days *Sānaxmdzots* hunted with fair success. On one occasion, when out with his son, he happened to notice a number of female goats on a narrow point of rock, beneath which there was a sheer drop to a jagged pile of boulders. Quickly realizing that there was only one approach to the point where the animals were standing, *Sānaxmdzots* told his son to remain below while he climbed up to stalk his quarry. With extreme caution, he succeeded in getting between the goats and the only line of escape; then he knew they were his, and stood up boldly. He shot two or three, and stampeded the rest into plunging over the precipice where they were crushed to death on the rocks far beneath. The successful hunter climbed down to where his son had remained and the two carried one of the carcasses out to the trail where

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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the packers were to meet them. They were not due to arrive for several hours, so *Sâuxumdaxs* cooked the goat and had a plentiful meal ready for his followers. They asked whether he had had any luck, and he answered casually that his son had killed one, but when they expressed regret at his lack of fortune, *Sâuxumdaxs* pointed to the pile of dead goats, visible in the distance, and said:

"See what my son killed."

Never before had there been such a slaughter of goats at one time, and it was obvious that no time could be lost if the meat was to be smoked before winter. Fortunately, there was a large cave in the vicinity where they established their headquarters. The packers were divided into two parties; some brought in the carcasses, while others kept a fire smouldering, tended the drying meat, and boiled out the grease. It was a slow process and there was a heavy snowfall before it was finished. The snow drifted into the narrow valley to such a depth that it was impossible to think of leaving. The beleaguered hunters were well provided with food; melted snow gave them water, and the cave was sufficient shelter, so their confinement was more irksome than dangerous. Nor did it prove profitless. The smell of food attracted two martens which were so unafraid that they were killed with sticks. All the hunters began to make traps which soon provided them with enough skins to make several of the much-prized blankets.

So the winter dragged away. The wife of one of the packers had a reputation for faithlessness and her husband's companions used to tease him by saying that his wife would have remarried before he got home. This wore on his nerves until he determined to try to reach the village in spite of the snow. He constructed a pair of snow-shoes and set out, carrying with him enough marten-skins for four blankets, packed in a sack made from the stomach of one of the goats. The journey was less difficult than he had feared; he camped for one night, and reached his own village soon after dusk of the next day. Looking through the doorway, he saw his father throwing food into the fire and realised that someone must have died. He called out anxiously, but his parents, who had long since abandoned hope for his son's safety, could not believe that his voice was real, and were not convinced until he actually stood before him. The long-absent one asked for whom the food was being thrown on the fire, and his father replied:

"For you. We thought you must be dead and have burnt almost all your personal possessions."

"That does not matter," replied the son. "We have plenty of meat, grease, and furs."

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As soon as the weather moderated, the men of the party returned, each carrying enough marten skins for at least one blanket. Some had as many as four or five cloths could be made, in addition to the large supplies of cracked gum resin and grease.

THE HUNTING OF A LAND OTTER

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In the early days, when the visit of a trading vessel to Bella Coola was a rare event, it is remembered that an *Ealus* or chief bought a musket from the captain of the *Raven*. He paid for it a pile of beaver skins which, when stacked up, was equal in height to the length of the weapon. This was one of the first muskets owned by a Bella Coola and the chief took great care of it, never wearing a cuirass, and hanging it with ropes from the roof of his house whenever he was not actually using it. One day a certain *Snalkak* asked the owner to lend him the musket to hunt geese. This was an slight request, and it was surprising, since *Snalkak* was not a hunter, but merely packed in meat killed by others. At first the chief was unwilling to allow his prized weapon out of his sight, but at last consented when *Snalkak* promised to give him half the geese that he might kill.

Snalkak probably thought that even temporary possession of the marvelous musket would make it possible for him to kill geese, but when he had climbed up into the mountains, and waited for hours, he had not succeeded even in approaching one. He knew that if he returned home, unsuccessful and without some plausible excuse, he would be laughed at, so he determined to cover his failure. First he beat the musket on a boulder until it was bent and battered, then he took a sharp rock and pounded himself until he was covered with blood from head to foot, as if he had been caught in a land slide. When near the village, he lay down on the ground and called lustily for help, so that the people could not locate the sound, but after a short search someone found the would-be hunter, apparently in the last stages of exhaustion. Help was called, and *Snalkak* carried home, moaning feebly and saying that he would die. He could just whisper that he had been caught in a slide on the other side of the mountain, this explanation being necessary since no one had heard one in the near vicinity. As the apparent sufferer was lying in his house, one man noticed that the patient's wounds were from guns, not from knives, and loudly proposed that *Snalkak* must have scratched himself to conceal his lack of success. Everyone came crowding around and agreed that this must be the case. *Snalkak* finally admitted the deception and congratulated his discoverer on his powers of observation. After a few days, he was as well as ever, but the chief had lost his precious musket.

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[illegible] spring Inuktuk declined to accompany most of the able-bodied men of his village to the coast to gather herring, but lazily stayed at home with the old people. One day, when passing from one village to another, he saw a herd of caribou close to hand. He smoothly but hurriedly built up an inkwash on a burner, and by his clan-laws might be no controversy as [illegible] should. He was armed only with a small knife but, after coughing as near as possible, he suddenly sprang up with a cry which was enough to overpower the herd into a [illegible]. Inuktuk was in close pursuit and soon overtook a buck which had become caught by its horns in a thorny bush. Without hesitation, the hunter leapt on to the animal's back, preparatory to cutting its throat. But the sudden burden so terrified the caribou that it reared and jumped, enabling its rider to escape, and finally freed itself before its rider had been able to do more than cling precariously to its back. Blind with fear and utterly confused, the animal plunged into another bush where its antlers were caught more firmly than before, and Inuktuk, after several efforts, was able to cut its windpipe. The caribou fell to the ground and the jubilant hunter dispatched it.

Inuktuk alone could not carry back all the meat, so he hurried home for assistance, taking with him only one antler as proof of his kill. When he told the inmates of his own house what he had done, and invited them to carry home the meat, they jeered at him for telling such a preposterous tale. Inuktuk warned them that if they declined to help he would go elsewhere, and they would lose their share of the meat, but they only laughed the more. True to his word, he went once more, and when his fellows heard him repeating the same story, they began to wonder whether, after all, it might have been the truth. One man picked up the antler which Inuktuk had thrown down in disgust at their suspicions and found fresh blood on its tines. So they hastily went once more and offered to accompany him. Finally, the occupants of the new houses were together and packed home the meat of the caribou. In this way Inuktuk redeemed his reputation to a certain extent.

[illegible]

One November, not many years after the settlement of the north, a Mackenzie chief, Ahmaknakuna, set out with four companions to hunt musk-ox and caribou. It was the rutting season, and the five were fortunate enough to come upon a number of the animals on a narrow ridge. Each singled out a female and shot an arrow, the sudden pain caused the victims to jump wildly, and fell from the narrow ridge. The males blindly leapt after them to be pounded to death on the rocks below. There was

or the aesthetic, their skill in dancing and dramatics is noteworthy: no one who has witnessed a native dance can fail to have been impressed by the performance of the participants and the stage craft of the carpenters. The fact that no system of writing had ever been devised has prevented the establishment of a native literature, but the practice of passing down an extensive folklore by word of mouth shows their retentive powers as well as their faculty for remembering details. At present it is difficult to appreciate what must have been their energy in earlier times when they faced the struggle for existence, armed with stone tools. Rhenish axes gave them adequate tool, but only after axes had been built with great labour. Though game was plentiful, the hunter was equipped with nothing more formidable than a bow and arrow. The simplest task required patience and skill undreamed of by the average white man. If the reader will allow his imagination to carry him backwards two hundred years, he will realize that the mere provision of food and clothing occupied almost every effort and ensured survival.

Blood is bound with many admirable characteristics, the Bulu Cloth display others which strike the white man as unprepossessing. A first impression is the untidiness of their houses. Externally, they are often fairly neat, but confusion reigns within. Clothing, instead of being hung up, is left lying on the floor, bed-coverings are piled carelessly, dirty dishes cover the tables, dogs and children swarm over the floor. Bits abound, all is dirty and slovenly. The house itself may be uncomplicated, a window is the glass and has been boarded up, the roof leaks, or the eaves are falling down. Nor are the surroundings more attractive. There is one struggling flower-bed in the village, but elsewhere the houses are surrounded by masses of mud where hens and cocks wander, dogs prowl, and children play. In the darkness the mosquitoes make their appearance, but even at best all is squalid and unhappy.

They are only slightly more particular about their personal appearance. The men are diverse them. They wash occa-

[illegible]: Name of a Nuxalk man.
[illegible]: Name of a Bella Coola man.
[illegible]: sea lion.
[illegible], "A Dropping Off": The giving, on demand, by a marriage dancer of [illegible] to a bride.
[illegible]: Supernatural name of Raven.
[illegible], "Frenzied": Term applied to Cannibals and other destructive fabulous [illegible] in a state of frenzy.
[illegible]: Ceremonial exclusion of all but the singers from a house where a dance is [illegible].
[illegible]: Kimsquit was mentioned in an ancient story.
[illegible]: Name, probably of Kwakiutl origin.

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[illegible]: Female dancer mentioned in a Raven story.
[illegible]: Name of a Kimsquit man.
[illegible] name, woman: Mother, term used by children.
[illegible]: Cedarwood Bower Bowler.
[illegible]: Butterfly.
[illegible]: Shimmering waves.
[illegible]: Fly, insect.
[illegible]: Downy gooseberry.
[illegible]: 1—Father, common term in indirect address.
2—Ceremonial designation for the supreme deity.
[illegible]: Supplication.
[illegible]: Elderly male relatives of same conveyed family.
[illegible]: 1—One of the four sons to settle on Dalliss in the beginning of time.
2—Name of the name [illegible] when used by a male child.
[illegible]: Name of the name [illegible] when used by a female child.
[illegible]: One of the supernatural Carpenters.
[illegible]: One of the supernatural Carpenters.
[illegible]: Measure of distance equal to the breadth of one thumb plus one finger.
[illegible]: Frank.
[illegible]: Supernatural giant maid.
[illegible] bottom spot.
[illegible]: Old male sea lion.
[illegible]: Water maid.
[illegible]: Was mentioned in an ancient story.
[illegible], "Long Neck": One of the supernatural names of Great Blue Heron.
[illegible]: Co-husband to a polyandrous household.
[illegible]: One of the gambols.
[illegible]: Generic term for the four supernatural Carpenters.
[illegible]: Spruce.
[illegible]: One of the four sons to settle on Dalliss in the beginning of time.
[illegible]: Land of salmon.
[illegible]: Mountain in the upper Bella Coola valley.
[illegible] sack carried by hunters when penetrating into the mountains.
[illegible]: Red huckleberry.